

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-15 are withdrawn and claims 16-19 are amended. No new matter is added.

In view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiner Evanisko at the interview held January 19, 2005, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicant's record of the interview.

I. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

A. Claims 16, 18 and 19

The Office Action rejects claims 16, 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 08-324575 to Kanao in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,063,665 to Schneider et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

None of the applied references disclose or suggest "printing a character of ink on a surface of a molded member; and forming a protrusion directly on the surface of the molded member, on which the character has already been printed" (emphasis added), as recited in amended claim 16, and similarly recited in claims 18 and 19.

Instead, Kanao discloses a method, including printing an alphabetic character on a metal or synthetic resin substrate, forming a top coating over the metal or synthetic resin substrate and the printed character, and subsequently forming Braille points over the top coating. See, e.g., Kanao, Fig. 1, and paragraphs [0006]-[0007]. That is, an alphabetic character is printed on a metal or synthetic resin substrate, while, in contrast, Braille points are formed on a top coating. It is plain from Kanao, that the alphabetic character and the Braille points are formed on different surfaces.

Claims 16, 18 and 19, on the other hand, plainly recite that a character of ink (e.g., an alphabetic character) and a protrusion (e.g., a Braille point) are formed on the same surface. ("... forming a protrusion directly on the surface of the molded member, on which the character has already been printed"). As Kanao teaches forming alphabetic characters and Braille points on different surfaces, and claims 16, 18 and 19 recite printing a character of ink and forming a protrusion on the same surface, Kanao cannot be said to teach or suggest the methods recited in claims 16, 18 and 19.

Schneider does not remedy the deficiencies of Kanao. Schneider is cited for its teaching of a method employing a molded member, rather than a metal or synthetic resin substrate, as taught by Kanao. However, Schneider, like Kanao does not teach or suggest printing a character of ink and forming a protrusion on the same surface. As neither Kanao nor Schneider teaches or suggests printing a character of ink and forming a protrusion on the same surface, the combination of references does not teach or suggest the methods of claims 16, 18 and 19.

Claims 16, 18 and 19 would not have been rendered obvious by Kanao in view of Schneider. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

B. Claim 17

The Office Action rejects claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kanao in view of Schneider and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,740,730 to Thompson, Sr. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 17, like claims 16, 18 and 19, recites "printing a character of ink on a surface of a molded member; and forming a protrusion directly on the surface of the molded member, on which the character has already been printed" (emphasis added). Accordingly, for the reasons discussed above, claim 17 distinguishes over the combination of Kanao and Schneider.

Thompson does not remedy the deficiencies of Kanao and Schneider. Thompson is cited for its teaching of the size of through holes in a printing screen. However, Thompson, like Kanao and Schneider, does not teach or suggest printing a character of ink and forming a protrusion on the same surface. As Kanao, Schneider and Thompson fail to teach or suggest printing a character of ink and forming a protrusion on the same surface, the combination of references does not teach or suggest the methods of claim 17.

Claim 17 would not have been rendered obvious by Kanao in view of Schneider and Thompson. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-19 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

Petition for Extension of Time
Amendment Transmittal

Date: January 21, 2005

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